

Special Features of the MCC Building

The Crosses and Clay Medallions of Middletown Christian Church

God to manage well every aspect of our lives and of the life of our planet. We encourage our members to consider the Tithe (10% of spendable income) as "the standard of giving which matches our standard of living."



11 The Hands of the Servant remind us that Christ "came not to be served, but to serve" (Matt. 28:20) and that He called us to be "servants" to one another and to our world. Middletown Christian Church seeks to be "The Servant Church." The way we treat each other in the fellowship of the church; the way we extend hospitality to strangers and newcomers, our

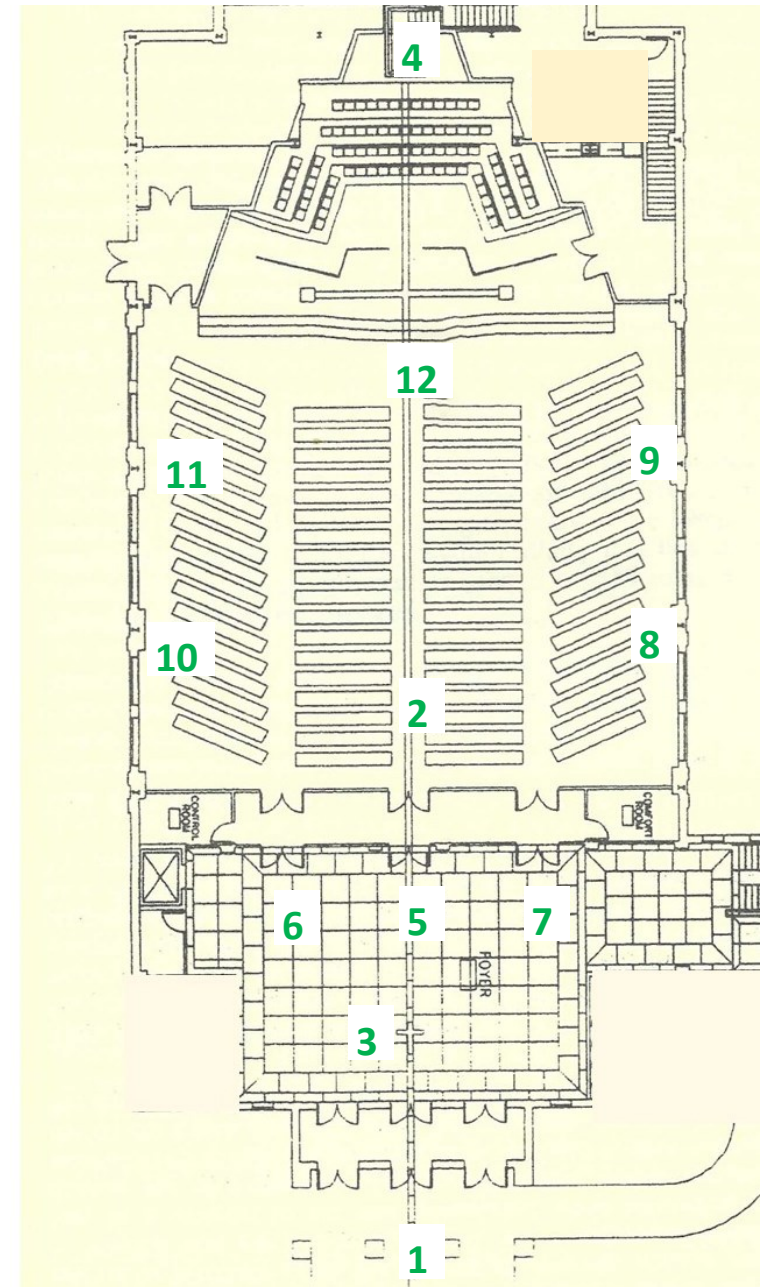
efforts to reach out to those who are among the least and the last are all aimed at manifesting our servant role. We serve because Christ first served us.

12 Our Communion Table. The table is designed to be functional.

At its center, however, is a unique work of art - The Incarnation - which features a rare combination of clay and the purest of crystal. The clay has been used to mold a "Chalice with Saint Andrew's Cross" which is the logo of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It was made and donated by



Ron Stambaugh of Little Bit of Bybee and is made of unglazed Kentucky clay. It is placed on a crystal disc which has been etched to create a starburst at the center of the cross in the chalice. The clay represents the humanity of Christ. The crystal represents his divinity. Together, they form a symbol of his incarnation celebrated at Communion each week.



Numbers correspond to pictures in the narrative.

In a combination of architectural design and special appointments, the Cross can be found everywhere one looks whether inside or outside the building. There are almost too many crosses to count — all of the window grilles, ends of the pews, ends of the communion table, etc. Among these are some that deserve special explanation.

1 **The Modified Iona Cross** chosen as the “Middletown Christian Cross” can be seen in the masonry work at both the front and rear of the Sanctuary Building. The Isle of Iona is said to be the seat of Christianity in Scotland. The Disciples of Christ denomination traces our origins to the Presbyterian Church in Scotland through Alexander Campbell, and with the Iona Cross we

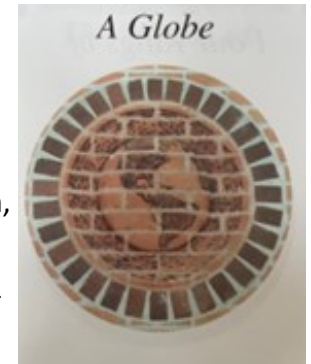


remember that historic tie. However, MCC modified the Iona Cross by expanding and extending the circle to the ends of the transept (as can be seen in

the Chancel Cross). We have extended the circle to remind us of the inclusive fellowship we share in our church and to represent our commitment to the larger church. The cross that is fully in the center of that circle represents our desire to allow Christ to be fully at the center of our lives and of the life we share in the church.

courage each other to live healthy lives; participate in healthy relationships, and foster health and wellness however we may.

9 **A Globe** is the universal symbol for world missions. Found on the column at the right front of the Sanctuary, it represents our desire to be Mission-Minded. Jesus Christ gave us the Great Commission, so following His commandment and the leadership of His spirit, we seek to be people with a mission living by a well-defined personal mission statement. Our church programs are mission-centered and directed by a clear mission statement found in our bylaws. We encourage all our groups to include mission activities in their group life. Evangelism, reaching out to those who have never accepted Jesus Christ as their personal Lord and Savior and those who do not have a church home in our community, is the most important expression of our mission both here at home and around the world



10 **Four Rings of the Steward** serve to remind us that "everything is stewardship and stewardship is everything." Located at the top of the column at the left rear of the Sanctuary, this symbol represents our responsibility to manage well our time, talent, tissue and treasure. We recognize that stewardship was the topic most often addressed in the teachings of Jesus; that He practiced stewardship even in the sacrifice of His life; and that we are called by



of us opening our lives to His Presence. This symbol is aligned with the aisle leading to the chancel area where the Spirit speaks to us through the gift of preaching.

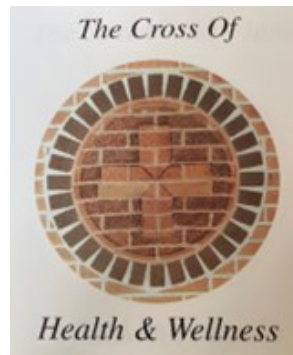
7 The Triune Circles and Heart is a symbol created to express our desire to live by the highest and best principles known. It is located above the door to the right of the center.



Circles are common symbols for the Trinity. The Heart is a common symbol for Love. By combining the symbols, we give expression to the Great Commandment -- Love of God above all else...love of neighbor...love of self. Jesus said that "...the Law and the Prophets" are summed up by loving God and loving others (Matt. 7:12). The Great Com-

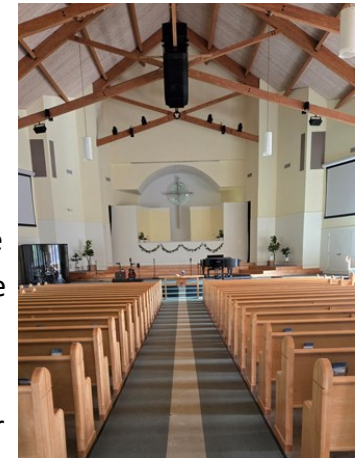
mandment represents the highest and best principles we can express in a variety of ways. This symbol is aligned with the right aisle leading to the front where Scripture is read, learning the highest and best principles by which to live.

8 The Cross of Health and Wellness is represented in the Greek Cross at the head of the column at the right rear of the Sanctuary. Often, this cross is red or white and reminds of the importance of issues related to health and healing. One of the most important activities in the life and ministry of Jesus was His willingness to heal people of illnesses of body, mind and spirit. Just as health and wellness was important to Jesus, it has always been important to the church. At Middletown Christian, we en-



Three Special Presentations of the Cross

2 The Cross of the Present begins at the curb as one approaches the main entrance to the building. There is a subtle line in the concrete work of the sidewalk (as seen in the previous picture) which continues into the center front door and connects in the terrazzo floor of the foyer, to the grey stripe in the center of the main aisle, to the darker wood of the Choir Area on the Chancel and concludes at



the Baptistry. This line joins a transept (cross bar) of grey carpet on the Chancel at the head of the center aisle. The Communion Table had been located at the transept, yet has now been located on the floor, accessible to all.

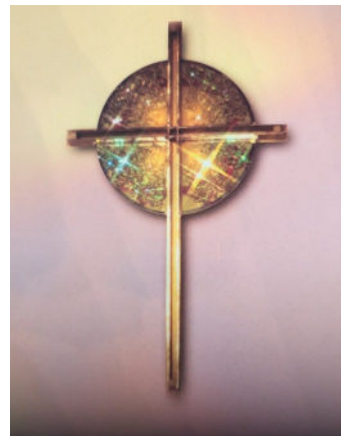
This cross represents the Christ of the Present or the Church of the Present. Christ is active in the life of the church beginning with our lives in the "outside world" and continuing with us into the Sanctuary. Here we meet Christ at the Communion table and hear Christ proclaimed in Scripture from the chancel. We hear God praised in the Choir. We are united with Christ in Baptism. All these experiences are part of our worship each week.

3 The Cross of the Past is integrated into the Cross of the Present as it enters the Foyer. This cross is embedded in the terrazzo floor and is outlined in brass. A quotation from Jesus is embedded in the cross and reads: "Upon this rock I will build my church and the forces of evil will not prevail against it." (Matthew 16:1)



This cross represents the Christ of History, or the Church of History built upon the teachings of Jesus and the faithfulness of all the "saints" who have gone before. Its incorporation into the Cross of the Present symbolizes the importance of remaining in touch with our history and tradition as modern-day Christians.

4 The Cross of Hope and Glory represents the Christ of the Future or the Church of the Future toward that which we are moving. It is the goal of all our lives. It is the object of our faith — that in Christ we have even now begun to live forever. This crystal glass cross is found on the wall beyond the Chancel and above the Baptistry.

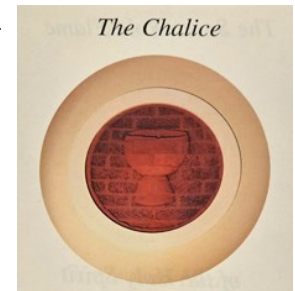


This cross does not connect to the other two. It is separated to represent the element of faith which is necessary to claim our hope and the glory of Eternal Life. It is suspended above the source of our new life...the beginning of Eternal Life...which we believe occurs at baptism. The art glass provides the hues of the rainbow and reminds us of the flood and the promise. The spectrum is also symbolic of the life through which we move from childhood to youth to young, middle and older adult until at last we reach the "golden years" and prepare for eternity. Our faith accompanies us along the way.

Clay & Brick Sculptures

Seven hand-carved sculptures have been placed above the three doors entering the Sanctuary from the foyer and at the top of each of the four brick exterior columns on the walls of the Sanctuary. They were carved into wet clay and then the bricks were numbered, fired and reassembled by master masons. The seven symbols chosen for the sculptures represent seven characteristics of the Life of Christ to which we aspire in our Christian Life.

5 The Chalice represents Christ's willingness to lay down His life for our salvation. At communion each week we remember His words: "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." (I Corinthians 11:25) At Middletown Christian Church, we seek to allow the Living Presence of Jesus Christ to be at work in and through our lives. We say that our church seeks to be "*Where Christ is the Center.*" In our church building, we have placed the chalice above the center door, above the center aisle in alignment with the communion table which stands at the center of our worship.



6 The Seven-fold Flame of the Holy Spirit, located above the door to the left of center represents "Holy Spirituality" in the life of Christ and in our lives as his disciples. We seek to experience the Living Presence of Jesus Christ at work in and through our lives. Usually, we speak of the Presence as the "Holy Spirit", given to us as a gift at baptism. "Holy Spirituality" is a matter

